

Out in Front!

*A Call for Leadership in Funding the Needs of
Bay Area Lesbian and Gay People*



A Report of the Lesbian and Gay Philanthropy Project

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Out in Front!
A report of the
Lesbian and Gay
Philanthropy Project
1995

HORIZONS
FOUNDATION

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San Francisco, CA 94102
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Out in Front! is a comprehensive report for individual donors and institutional funders to use in responding to the issues and concerns of lesbian and gay youth and adults in the San Francisco Bay Area. Input for this publication was gathered through focus groups and personal interviews with community leaders, donors, and service providers. This publication is the result of the initial phase of the Lesbian and Gay Philanthropy Project (LGPP), a program of the Horizons Foundation.

The Lesbian and Gay Philanthropy Project began in 1993 and grew out of efforts to explore the issues related to expanding funding of services addressing the needs of lesbian and gay people in the nine-county, San Francisco Bay Area. The LGPP is managed by a volunteer Steering Committee of community representatives. Beyond publication of this report, the final phase will produce measurable efforts in outreach, education, and support to:

- ▼ Assist funders and donors to “come out of the closet” and serve as role models of effective and responsible philanthropy, thus broadening the resource pool available to address the needs of this population.
- ▼ Maintain proactive efforts to foster philanthropy within the Bay Area lesbian and gay community, targeting both funding organizations and individuals.
- ▼ Strengthen the network of existing services, establishing a process by which information about community priorities can be obtained more readily in the future.

The Horizons Foundation is a nonprofit community foundation serving the lesbian and gay community of the nine-county, San Francisco Bay Area since 1979. Through grantmaking, technical assistance, and funding advocacy programs, the Foundation provides leadership in the recognition and encouragement of philanthropy to lesbian and gay projects and organizations. ▼



Introduction

The San Francisco Bay Area has one of the largest populations of lesbian and gay people in the country. Lesbian and gay youth and adults contribute significantly to the diverse political and social fabric of the region. However, their ability to obtain community services that affirm their sexual orientation remains severely limited. In response, many lesbian- and gay-specific programs have developed to fill this void. Horizons Foundation's database lists more than 200 such programs in the nine-county Bay Area, and with budgets ranging from \$5,000 to \$1.6 million. These programs provide unique and crucial health, human, cultural, educational, and spiritual services to hundreds of thousands of lesbian and gay youth and adults. However, their existence is threatened daily by an inability to access funding from foundations and individual donors.

Executive Summary

Foundation and individual donor support for lesbian and gay issues nationwide is largely silent or nonexistent. Of 6,785 foundations listed in the 1994 Foundation Directory, only 20 are listed in the index as supporting gay and lesbian issues. Although Bay Area foundations have a reputation for accessibility, a recent survey of a representative group of Bay Area lesbian and gay community-based organizations indicates that during the past two fiscal years, 73% report no support from local foundations other than Horizons and BAPHR (both lesbian/gay specific foundations). For the remaining 27%, local foundation support during the same period has accounted for less than 3% of the organizations' budgets.

Beginning in 1993, the Horizons Foundation sponsored a series of meetings with community leaders and service providers to identify the barriers to increased funding. These leaders and providers identified the following obstacles to raising funds from individuals and foundations:

- **From Foundations/Institutional Funders:** The lack of inclusion of lesbians and gay men in grants made, staff, and trustees is often seen as a signal of refusal to consider an application. When requests for support have been made, applicants felt repeated denial of their requests was based on staff and trustees determining that funding of their proposals was *unnecessary* because of:
 1. A belief that funding is *already happening* through the support of AIDS programs, a filter through which funders may view lesbians and gay men exclusively. AIDS is only *one* of many significant health and human service issues facing this community.
 2. An erroneous assumption that lesbian and gay people receive appropriate and welcoming services at already-funded mainstream or traditional agencies.

3. A false notion that the Bay Area provides total freedom and safety for its gay citizens, thus eliminating any concern for physical attacks or civil rights violations targeting those citizens.
 4. A wide-spread perception that the “gay community” is white, middle-class, and male. This inaccuracy, coupled with awareness of the leadership displayed by lesbians and gay men in supporting AIDS programs, has created a myth that this community is capable of responding to its health and human service needs entirely on its own.
- **From Individuals:** Identifying broad numbers of lesbian and gay potential donors is difficult because so many remain hidden, lacking the personal safety to disclose their sexual orientation within the workplace, social networks, and families. In addition, AIDS programs still lack sufficient funding to cope with client demand, thus creating a drain on the available limited resources of donors who are accessible. Finally, community organizations, especially those serving lesbians and people of color, are relatively new and lack sufficient resources to develop and implement broad fund-raising campaigns.

This report is intended as a first step in a multi-phase project to provide grantmakers and individual donors with accurate information about lesbian and gay people. It is just a beginning. The gay community of the Bay Area is too diverse, too complex, to fully explore in this limited space.

We encourage you – as an individual donor, or staff member or trustee of a private, public, or corporate foundation – to:

- *Read* this report; educate yourself about this significant segment of the Bay Area’s population. The organizations listed in the Resource guide on Page 32 can provide further information.
- *Review* the priorities that drive your personal or institutional funding, and note how the gay community’s needs fit those priorities. Review and implement the “Next Steps” outlined on Page 31.
- *Donate* to services and programs that target, welcome, and address the needs of lesbian and gay youth and adults in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

By doing so, you will help confront and remove funding barriers that prevent gay people from helping themselves. You will also challenge all providers to respond to lesbians and gay men in an equitable way as they would any minority population in the Bay Area. Lesbian and gay youth and adults need equal access and support.

Our goal is to improve the quality of life for all in the Bay Area. The reality is that if we fail to include everyone who contributes to it, we fail the entire community. ▼

For hundreds of thousands of lesbians and gay men, the San Francisco Bay Area is home. They are teachers, clergy, parents, athletes, students, artists, business owners, landlords, judges, and politicians. They organize bowling leagues, congregations, schools, libraries, political clubs, business associations, and youth groups. They are a community of communities.

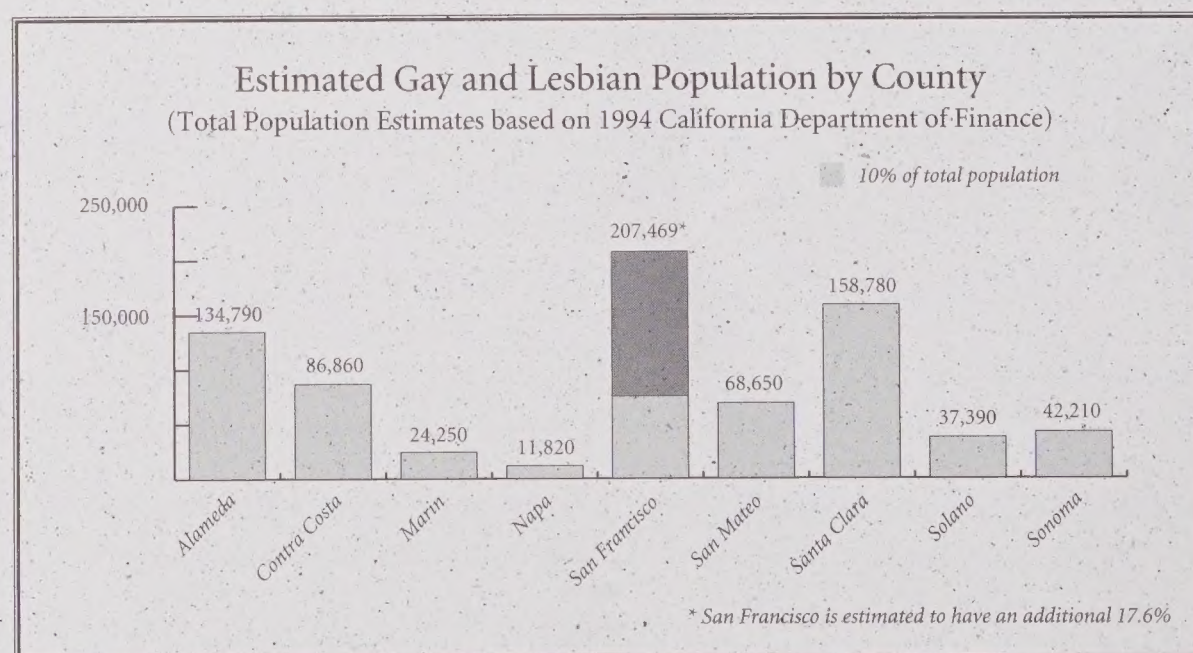
For more than two decades, San Francisco has served as a refuge for lesbians and gay men – a sanctuary from a world that actively seeks to deny, and often eliminate, their existence. But like any refuge, the San Francisco Bay Area cannot provide complete safety. The Bay Area is home also to hundreds of thousands of people who live with myths, stereotypes, and often hatred of lesbians and gay men. Many of these individuals carry this hatred into *their* roles as employers, landlords, judges, politicians, teachers, students, parents, and clergy.

As a result, Bay Area lesbians, gay men, and their families live each day with verbal and physical threats – challenges to their ability to do their jobs, establish households, and to move and act freely. Far too often, these threats are carried out, resulting in extreme emotional and physical injury. There is an urgent need for responsive health and human services in the face of this recurring harassment and consistent denial of basic human rights.

Demographic statistics, a common means for gaining insight and social understanding, remain difficult to secure or confirm for gay/lesbian youth and adults. U.S. census figures do not report sexual orientation, and the few studies or surveys that do take sexual orientation into account are often inaccurate because many gay people, fearing discrimination, rejection, and violence, will not truthfully disclose their sexual orientation to a stranger. However, estimates, although usually low, are possible.

A 1989 *San Francisco Examiner* poll estimates that 10% of the Bay Area population is gay.¹ In reporting the poll results, the paper admits that this percentage is probably low due to the continuing stigma associated with being lesbian or gay and the related

Case for Support



concern over "coming out" or revealing one's sexual orientation, even in an anonymous phone survey. Another study showed that 27.6% of the population of San Francisco is lesbian or gay.²

Although the Castro neighborhood of San Francisco has come to symbolize the "gay community," this 14-block neighborhood does not reflect the diversity of gay men and lesbians. The gay population includes men and women equally, and is made up of every ethnic group, race, religion, age, and class; they live in every county, in every neighborhood; they are a part of every diverse community and group which make up the Bay Area. The limited images of the Bay Area gay community that appear in the media usually portray this entire population as white, middle-class, and male. Nothing is further from reality.

Given the diversity within the lesbian and gay community, gay people have many of the same social service, health care, and cultural needs as heterosexuals in the Bay Area. But many of these needs are complicated by sexual orientation and the discrimination that accompanies it; society's heterosexism (the assumption that everyone is heterosexual) and homophobia (the irrational hatred and fear of homosexuals). Although the number of lesbian and gay people in the Bay Area remains an estimate, the seriousness of the health and human service issues of this population is a documented reality.

For example, substance abuse is a significant issue within the gay community, which suffers from drug and alcohol addiction at a higher rate than the community as a whole.³ This can be compared to similar higher rates found in a number of oppressed minority communities. This statistic is due, in part, to society's homophobia. When treatment programs do not accept, welcome, and deal with the whole of a client's environment and social situations, successes are reduced significantly.

As another example, hate crimes, which are experienced also by other minority groups, are of grave concern to the gay/lesbian community. Hate crimes are under-reported due to victims' reluctance to identify themselves as gay to law enforcement officials who may themselves be hostile or refuse to acknowledge "gay-bashing" as a hate crime. Victims of these crimes may also fear reporting incidents because publicity can result in rejection and discrimination at home or in the workplace. When anti-gay/lesbian hate crimes result in murder, the majority of the homicides are marked by an extraordinarily high level of gratuitous violence, or "overkill."⁴

Some issues are particular to lesbians and gay men. Gay families in the nine-county Bay Area confront severe legal and social discrimination. Lesbian and gay couples, for instance, do not have the same legal rights as married heterosexuals. The cities of Berkeley and San Francisco are the only Bay Area communities that allow legal registration of gay relationships (domestic partners), yet even this governmental recognition provides no guaranteed access or rights. Denial of such rights often results in refusal of hospital visitation, inheritance, insurance benefits, child custody, and, in general, the social acceptance that heterosexual couples take for granted.

Case for Support

For lesbian and gay people, especially youth, society's devaluation or denial of their existence can result in low self-esteem and self-hatred manifested in phenomena such as teenagers dropping out of school and an intolerably high suicide rate. The immediate resources available to most everyone else in the Bay Area for counseling, support, and acceptance – family, church, and friends – often reject gay people and, in fact, contribute to the problem of poor self-image.

Gay people encounter rejection and discrimination not only from personal support networks but from mainstream social and health service providers. Even if mainstream organizations are well-intentioned, they often lack knowledge about the gay community and consequently are ill-equipped to deal with gay clients. These providers may be sensitive but unaware of how to reach potential lesbian and gay clients in ways that welcome and draw them to the needed service. They also challenge of maintaining a receptive environment for all their clients within a society that tolerates, and even encourages, rejection of gay people.

As a result, hundreds of non-profit organizations and programs specifically serving lesbians and gay men have developed during the past two decades. The diversity of gay people in the Bay Area poses a challenge to these service providers. These lesbian and gay community-based non-profits must not only be able to deal with gender, ethnic, class, age, and religious differences, but also with differing attitudes and comfort levels about being gay and the fear some people feel in seeking services from a gay-identified agency. Although successful program models do exist, their services are significantly under-funded and may be geographically and/or culturally inaccessible to the full range of gay people in the Bay Area. The limited number of welcoming services forces many gay and lesbian youth and adults to travel many miles and cross county lines to access these programs.

The health and well-being of Bay Area lesbian/gay youth and adults is important to the community-at-large. Issues and obstacles that remain unaddressed not only affect the 10 to 25+% of the Bay Area population that is homosexual, but also affect their parents, siblings, and children; friends; neighbors; and co-workers. Anti-gay hate crimes, which are on the increase, affect the Bay Area neighborhoods and communities in which they happen. Caring friends and families of targeted gay individuals have become secondary victims. Intolerance and unchallenged discrimination within the education system affects entire classes and schools, not just the student or teacher who is labeled gay.

In meeting the needs of the gay community, the larger community of the Bay Area needs to be educated about lesbians and gay men, people with whom they interact daily whether they know it or not. A community can only become healthy and safe if it respects, maintains, and protects the health, contributions, and safety of all its members. ▼

Next Steps:

for Foundations/Institutional Funders

1. Make sure you are communicating a willingness to consider applications from lesbian and gay programs:
 - a. Do guideline definitions of youth, families, spouse, elders, etc. include lesbian and gay people?
 - b. Do published grant lists (a common indicator of a foundation's priorities) provide evidence of a willingness to receive such proposals?
 - c. Do annual report and newsletter photos include images of lesbian and gay people?
2. Make sure that internal policies support program officers in pursuing and advocating for lesbian- and gay-specific proposals:
 - a. Do institutional personnel policies include protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation?
 - b. Are correspondence and educational materials selected, prepared, and presented with the assumption that some donors, staff, and trustees may be lesbian or gay?
 - c. Are lesbian and gay men openly recruited for staff and trustee positions?
3. Recognize that lesbian and gay youth and adults do not require a special category before their issues can be considered for funding. Traditional funding categories of health, youth, elders, arts, etc. are exactly where proposals for and from lesbians and gay men belong.
4. Recognize that funding any one program will not reach the entire lesbian and gay community. In response to the diversity of the community and its issues, some programs serve lesbians only, gay men only, or may focus on age, race, or other identifying factors.
5. Recognize that funding AIDS programs is not equivalent to funding the full needs of lesbian and gay people. AIDS is an important health issue to the gay community. Although many, not all, AIDS programs do serve gay men (very few serve lesbians), this is only one aspect of a complex and diverse range of issues.
6. Recognize that the attacks on lesbian and gay people and their civil rights are no different than those motivated by hate of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, or physical ability.
7. Before funding any program, inquire how that organization conducts outreach to and makes its services accessible to lesbian and gay youth and adults. This applies to any program serving any age group, race, ethnicity, gender, and geographical area.
8. Become a leader—an innovator. Recognize that providing seed-grants to build the capacity of lesbian and gay organizations and their leaders in the Bay Area will place the foundation in a positive and unique position within the philanthropic community nationwide.
9. Learn more. Contact the Horizons Foundation and the various resources cited in this publication to obtain additional information.

Resources

There are more than 200 lesbian and gay organizations and projects in the San Francisco Bay Area. The following is a representative listing of agencies that can serve as first-step resources in obtaining further information and referrals.

For general information about community issues and programs, contact:

Horizons Foundation
870 Market Street, Suite 718
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 398-2333

United Way of the Bay Area
50 California Street, Suite 200
San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 772-4357

Working Group on Funding
Lesbian & Gay Issues
116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003
(212) 475-2930

For information about the specific issues outlined in this report, contact:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COUNTY RESOURCES

Pacific Center for Human Growth
(Alameda/Contra Costa)
2712 Telegraph Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 548-8283

Billy DeFrank Community Center
(Santa Clara)
175 Stockton Avenue
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 441-7411

Spectrum (Marin)
1000 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
San Anselmo, CA 94960
(415) 457-1131

Napa Valley Men's Network (Napa)
P.O. Box 1742
Sonoma, CA 95476
(707) 996-5454

Napa Valley Women's Network (Napa)
P.O. Box 3555
Yountville, CA 94599
(707) 944-8081

Youth & Family Assistance (San Mateo)
609 Price Avenue, No. 202
Redwood City, CA 94063
(415) 366-8401

Gay & Lesbian Information Line (Solano)
P.O. Box 9
Vacaville, CA 95696
(707) 448-1010

We the People (Sonoma)
P.O. Box 8218
Santa Rosa, CA 95407
(707) 573-8896

PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Community United Against Violence
973 Market Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 777-5500

Gay and Lesbian Alliance
Against Defamation/SF Bay Area
1360 Mission Street, Suite 200
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 861-2244

YOUTH

Lavender Youth Recreation
and Information Center
127 Collingwood Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 703-6150

Special Programs for Youth
Department of Public Health
375 Woodside Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94127
(415) 753-7778

ELDERS

Gay and Lesbian Outreach to Elders
1853 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 626-7000

American Society on Aging
833 Market Street, Suite 511
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 974-9630

RACE & ETHNICITY

Trikone

P.O. Box 21354
San Jose, CA 95151
(408) 270-8776

Gay Asian Pacific Alliance

P.O. Box 421884
San Francisco, CA 94142
(415) 282-4272

Asian Pacific Sisters

Lesbian Bisexual Network
P.O. Box 170596
San Francisco, CA 94117
(510) 814-2422

Lesbians and Gays of African Descent
for Democratic Action

584 Castro Street, No. 130
San Francisco, CA 94114

Lesbians of Color Project/NCLR

870 Market Street, Suite 572
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 392-6257

Native American AIDS Project

1540 Market Street, Suite 425
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 522-2460

LLEGO/California-Latino/a Lesbian,
Gay, & Bisexual Organization

P.O. Box 40816
San Francisco, CA 94140
(415) 554-8436

HEALTH

Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services

1748 Market Street, Suite 201
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 565-7667

Operation Concern

1853 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 626-7000

STOP AIDS Project

201 Sanchez
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 621-7177

Women's Cancer Resource Center

3023 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 548-9272

Gay and Lesbian Medical Association

273 Church Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 255-4547

SPIRITUALITY

Metropolitan Community Church

150 Eureka Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 863-4434

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

220 Danvers
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 861-6932

Dignity-Gay & Lesbian Catholics

208 Dolores Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 681-2491

Lutheran Lesbian and Gay Ministry

152 Church Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 553-4026

ARTS & CULTURE

Frameline

346 - 9th Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 703-8650

Brava! for Women in the Arts

2180 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 641-7657

Jon Sims Center for the Performing Arts

1519 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 554-0402

Lesbian Visual Artists

870 Market Street, Suite 618
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 788-6118

Theatre Rhinoceros

2926 - 16th Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 552-4100

CIVIL RIGHTS

National Center for Lesbian Rights

870 Market Street, Suite 572
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 392-6257

International Gay and Lesbian

Human Rights Commission
1360 Mission Street, Suite 200
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 255-8680

ACLU/Northern California Gay Rights Project

1663 Mission Street, Suite 460
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 621-2493

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